

# Ergonomics – Stretches & Exercises

## Background

Evidence available indicates that prolonged sitting (sedentary work) is common in Australian workplaces and it is associated with adverse health outcomes. Sedentary behaviour is defined as anything you do while sitting. Sitting for longer than 30 mins without a mini break or sitting all day at work is potentially detrimental to your health. (Safe Work Australia – Sitting and Standing <https://www.safeworkaustralia.gov.au/sedentary>).

The below information has been sourced from *WorkSafe Victoria Officewise – A guide to health and safety in the office Edition No 5. January 2006*

(<https://content.api.worksafe.vic.gov.au/sites/default/files/2018-06/ISBN-Officewise-guide-to-health-and-safety-in-the-office-2006-01.pdf>)

**REMEMBER IF YOU HAVE ANY INJURIES PLEASE SEEK THE ADVICE OF YOUR TREATING PRACTITIONER BEFORE COMMENCING ANY STRETCHING EXERCISES**

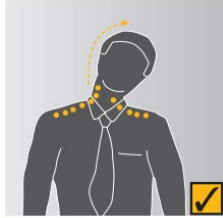
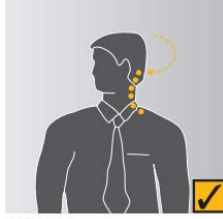

## S-T-R-E-T-C-H

Getting up and walking around is the best exercise you can do to give yourself a break from sitting. About every 20 to 30 minutes is a good guide to follow.

Stretching exercises help relax muscles, if possible stand up to do your stretches.

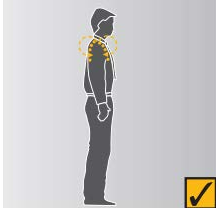


- Do a few of these stretches a couple of times every day
- Make sure you relax and perform them gently
- Hold each stretch or repeat as indicated
- Do not over stretch
- Stop if you feel discomfort
- Remember to stretch both sides

## Neck Stretches




 <p><small>B.1 Neck stretch</small></p>	<p><b>Neck Stretch</b> Keeping your chin tucked in, gently lower ear to shoulder and hold for 10 seconds on each side. Repeat several times</p>
 <p><small>B.2 Head turns</small></p>	<p><b>Head Turns</b> Turn head slowly to look over your left shoulder. Turn your head slowly to look over your right shoulder. Repeat several times</p>
 <p><small>B.3 Chin tucks</small></p>	<p><b>Chin Tucks</b> Raise your head to straighten the neck. Tuck the chin in and upwards creating a double chin. This also results in a forward head tilt. Repeat several times.</p>

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## Shoulder Stretches

 <p><small>B.4 Shoulder rolls</small></p>	<p><b>Shoulder Rolls</b> Circle your shoulders forward several times, and then backwards. Repeat 3 to 5 times.</p>
 <p><small>B.5 Wrist and elbow stretch</small></p>	<p><b>Wrist and Elbow</b> Interlace fingers, palms outward and straighten arms in front. Hold for 10 seconds. Repeat several times.</p>
 <p><small>B.6 Wrist stretch</small></p>	<p><b>Wrist Stretch</b> Straighten your arms in front and bend your right wrist forward, gently assist the stretch with your left hand. Hold for 10 seconds and then stretch your wrist back and hold for 10 seconds. Repeat stretching the left wrist.</p>

## Upper and Lower Back

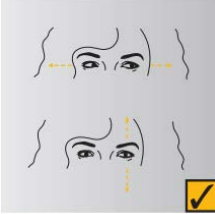

 <p><small>B.7 Upper and lower back stretch</small></p>	<p><b>Upper Back Stretch</b> Interlace fingers and turn palms upwards above the head. Straighten arms then slowly lean from side to side. Repeat movement several times</p>
 <p><small>B.8 Back arching</small></p>	<p><b>Back Arch</b> Stand up. Support your lower back with your hands and gently arch back and hold for 5 to 10 seconds. Repeat as often as needed</p>
 <p><small>B.9 Pectoral stretch</small></p>	<p><b>Pectoral Stretch</b> Raise both arms to shoulder height and bend elbows. Pull both elbows back to slowly bring shoulder blades towards each other. Repeat several times</p>

## Legs

 <p><small>B.10 Foot pump</small></p>	<p><b>Foot Pump</b> Stand up, holding the chair for balance and alternately raise heels and toes. Repeat 10 times</p>
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## Eyes

 <p>B.11 Eye exercise</p>	<p><b>Eye Exercises</b></p> <p>Sit up straight, face forward and repeat the following sequence several times without moving your head:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Look up, then down</li><li>Look left, then right</li></ul>
 <p>B.12 Visual rest</p>	<p><b>Visual Rest</b></p> <p>Look away from the screen. Focus on something that is more than 3 meters away e.g. look out the window or at a picture on a far wall. Shift your vision back to the screen and refocus.</p>

## Posture Checks

### **Check neck posture**

Position the top of your screen at eye level

If you are using a document holder position it directly beside or immediately below the screen

### **Check hand and wrist posture**

When typing, keep your wrists straight while your fingers are suspended over the keyboard.

Keep elbows at keyboard level, you may need to adjust the desk or chair height

Do not rest your wrists on the desk or keyboard while typing. Keep hands suspended

Rest on desk between periods of typing

### **Check shoulder posture**

Relax your shoulders and rest your hands on your lap. Bend your elbows to no more than 90 degrees and check the height of your fingertips against your current work height. If the work (keyboard or desk) is higher than your hands you may be hunching your shoulders. If so, try and raise your chair height or lower your desk height and try to keep your shoulders relaxed while working.

### **Check your back support**

Sit well back in your chair – if your feet need support, use a footrest

Adjust the backrest on your chair to support your lower back

### **Check eye comfort**

Is there enough light to see documents?

Do windows or lights cause glare or reflection on the screen? If so, try turning the screen or blocking the path of the light.

Use a screen with a light background when working with text; it is more comfortable for the eyes.